

International Workshop on Reparation – July 9, 2019

Royal Museum for Central Africa - Brussels

Concept note

Reparation: Starting point

Since the end of the Cold War, more and more specialists in history, philosophy, psychology and other social sciences pay attention to what is designated as one of the most important conditions for addressing the legacy of the past: reparation. However, reparation appears as an undertheorized phenomenon and a rather crude analytical tool. Therefore, it seems crucial to question the scope and limits of reparation as a conflict transformation process.

The purpose of this conference is neither to overcome all the shortcomings of this concept, nor to define it once and for all. It is rather to put into question some basic assumptions regarding reparation after mass atrocities. Indeed, how can numerous policy-makers, practitioners and curators contend that reparation is either impossible, or slippery while it is often considered by descendants of victims as a *sine qua non* condition for moving forward? How can this concept be described as an obvious goal for some and as illusory by others? In which conditions is reparation effective – and in which cases is it not?

To address these questions, a first workshop will take place in Belgium on July 9 2019 at the Royal Museum for Central Africa. The meeting is conceived as a multidisciplinary platform for practitioners (NGO workers, policy-makers, diplomats, artists) and scholars involved in post-conflict settings. In terms of disciplines, the workshop is completely open (sociology, law, anthropology, political science, social psychology, history, religious studies).

Most participants in the workshop will concentrate on the scope and limitations of concrete practices: how is reparation negotiated in the field? By whom? On behalf of whom? What are the outcomes of these negotiation processes so far? To what extent do they favour a rapprochement between parties? What is the specific role of experts in this matter? How can we evaluate, assess, measure reparation? What does success – or failure - mean? Who decides what a failure means in this field? When? On the basis of which criteria? How can practitioners and scholars deal with the irreversible dimension of mass atrocities?

Beyond some transversal topics (like the balance of power and the burden of emotions), one of the major red threads of the workshop will be the time factor (plural temporalities, transgenerational and intergenerational transmission).

Methodology of the workshop

The workshop is conceived as a bridge between scholars and practitioners. Its objective is neither to produce strictly theoretical papers, nor to adopt a normative stance (check-list approach). It is rather to explore and clarify the challenges in the field. In other words, the debate will investigate the “pragmatics” of reparation (dilemmas, tensions, discrepancies, contradictions)

Partnership UCLouvain
NOHA network
Max Planck Institute Luxembourg

Venue – MRAC Tervueren

Schedule - Tuesday 9 July 2019

- 11.30 Registration – Lunch
- 13.00 Welcome Address - Introductory Remarks – Valérie Rosoux et Dorothee Delacroix
- 13.30 *Visit of the Museum* with a team of curators
- 15.30 Coffee Break
- 16.00 *Workshop - Guest Speakers*
- Capucine Boidin, anthropologist (IHEAL - Paris 3): Decolonial / Post-Colonial Studies
 - Edoardo Stoppioni, lawyer (MPI Luxembourg): Law and Reparation
 - Jie-Hyun Lim, historian (Critical Global Studies Institute, Sogang University): Concrete Consequences of the Call for Reparation
 - Bamby Ceuppens, MRAC Curator: Scope and Limits of Curatorship
- 17.00 *Workshop – Discussion*
- 18.00 *Conclusions*